### **MINUTES**

# MONTANA SENATE 58th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

# COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN BILL GLASER, on March 10, 2003 at 3:00 P.M., in Room 317-B Capitol.

# ROLL CALL

## Members Present:

Sen. Bill Glaser, Chairman (R)

Sen. Bob Story Jr., Vice Chairman (R)

Sen. Jerry W. Black (R)

Sen. Edward Butcher (R)

Sen. Mike Cooney (D)

Sen. Jim Elliott (D)

Sen. Royal Johnson (R)

Sen. Jeff Mangan (D)

Sen. Don Ryan (D)

Sen. Tom Zook (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Tari Elam, Committee Secretary

Connie Erickson, Legislative Branch

**Please Note**. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

## Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: HB 285, 3/6/2003; HB 573, 3/6/2003;

HB 572, 3/6/2003

Executive Action:

#### HEARING ON HB 285

<u>Sponsor</u>: REPRESENTATIVE ROY BROWN

<u>Proponents</u>: Kevin Phillips, Major, U.S. Army Reserves,

and Member, Reserve Officers' Association

(ROA)

John Tarr, Lt. Colonel (Retired), U.S. Army

Military Police Corps

Dave Dreher, Lt. Colonel, Commander, 370th

Quarter Master Battalion, Montana Army Reserves, and President, Reserve Officers'

Association (ROA)

Hal Manson, American Legion of Montana, and

Member, Reserve Officers' Association (ROA)

Alan Woodmansey, on behalf of himself Kevin Braun, Office of Legal Services, Department of Labor & Industry (DLI)

Bob Vogel, Director of Government Relations,

Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA),

in absentia

<u>Opponents</u>: NONE

<u>Informational Witnesses</u>: NONE

### Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0.1 - 4.}

REPRESENTATIVE ROY BROWN, HD 14, Billings, brought forward a bill which revises laws related to military status; requires public high schools provide equal access to U.S. Armed Forces recruiters as provided other recruiters; protects residency rights of armed service members called to active duty; and, provides certain protections for armed service members with professional licenses. REP. BROWN stated this bill has been termed "The Montana Patriot Act." He stated this is one of the most enjoyable bills he has had the privilege of working on for three main reasons: 1) the bill's bipartisan support; 2) the broad support from members of the Armed Services; and, 3) it has provided him with a way to assist those individuals now serving. REP. BROWN briefly outlined the various sections of the bill, stating the purpose and intent of each.

## Proponents' Testimony:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 4.1 - 20}

Kevin Phillips, Major, U.S. Army Reserves, stated he provided the original draft of this legislation and strongly supports the bill. Mr. Phillips submitted written testimony EXHIBIT (eds50a01).

John Tarr, Lt. Colonel (Retired), U.S. Army Military Police Corps, stated he retired after twenty-one years of service in the U.S. Army and conveyed his support for the bill. Mr. Tarr stated the military of today is not the same as that of yesterday. The military needs the same talents desired by colleges; therefore, they need the same access. The military needs people of intelligence who are willing and able to learn and offers various benefits to students who choose to enlist. He briefly outlined some packages presently being offered. He explained much of the middle class of today has no knowledge regarding the opportunities being offered, and he believes providing access to high school students will provide needed information. Mr. Tarr also spoke to the reasons underlying the second part of the bill, noting members of the armed services need voting rights and professional licenses protected.

Dave Dreher, Lt. Colonel, Commander, 370th Quarter Master Battalion, Montana Army Reserves, and President, Reserve Officers' Association, conveyed his support for the bill and stated his comments were limited to a resident's perspective. He believes whatever our personal thoughts on war, we must support those who put their lives at risk in order to protect our country. He provided an example of a battalion he recently trained, many members of which have now been deployed to Iraq.

Hal Manson, American Legion of Montana, and Member, ROA, conveyed his support for HB 285. He testified he believes it is the right of every young person to know what the military has to offer, and this information is most reasonably provided through counseling in high school. With regard to professional licenses, he provided an example of a dentist friend called to active duty in the early 1990's who experienced great difficulty with his license. Had this legislation been in effect there would have been no problem to solve. Mr. Manson urged the Committee recommend Do Concur on HB 285.

Alan Woodmansey, on behalf of himself, stated he supports the bill for two basic reasons: 1) the ability to speak with students in high schools; and, 2) protection for professional licenses held by military personnel. Mr. Woodmansey explained he is a Montana representative for Westpoint and an academy admissions representative who deals directly with high school

students. The ability to maintain communication with students is imperative in order to provide them with information regarding opportunities available at Westpoint, and the military in general. He provided an example of a location where access is extremely limited to portray the necessity of this aspect of the bill. Mr. Woodmansey also explained, as a licensed engineer, he understands when individuals are called to active duty the last thing they might think about is when professional licenses need renewing or organizational fees are due. He expressed his appreciation to the Committee.

Kevin Braun, Office of Legal Services, DLI, expressed his appreciation to REP. BROWN for bringing forward changes to the occupational licensing statute. He provided the Committee with two proposed amendments, see EXHIBIT(eds50a02) and EXHIBIT(eds50a03), which expand the scope of the bill to include occupations missed in the original version. He briefly explained the amendments.

Bob Vogel, Director of Government Relations, MTSBA, in absentia, submitted written testimony EXHIBIT (eds50a04).

# Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 20.2 - 29.6}

SENATOR MIKE COONEY, conveying his support for the bill, asked if there have been problems with access being provided to recruiters in Montana. REP. BROWN stated he was not certain about Montana specifically, however he knows of various problems arising in other states. REP. BROWN deferred to Mr. Tarr who indicated there have been some problems with access. SEN. COONEY asked REP. BROWN whether there has been a problem with enlisted people trying to vote in the state. REP. BROWN, noting there has not been a problem in Montana, and again relying upon experiences in other states, stated the Secretary of State requested the bill contain language which addressed the issue directly and completely.

SENATOR DON RYAN, referring to Mr. Tarr's response to SEN.

COONEY, asked if schools presently limiting access to recruiters are in violation of the law. Mr. Tarr replied at present no law addressing the issue in Montana. He also stated, under federal law, a part of the "No Child Left Behind Act" addresses the issue.

**SEN. RYAN** inquired about the House's reasoning behind requested changes to Section One of the bill. **REP. BROWN** explained changes

were necessary to ensure the bill's compliance with "No Child Left Behind" and the "Family Educational Right to Privacy Act of 1974." MTSBA proposed an amendment to bring the bill into compliance. REP. BROWN stated he did not disagree with the amendment.

SENATOR BOB STORY inquired whether an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or First Responder is covered under the licensing section of the bill. REP. BROWN replied, if the profession has a licensing board, they are covered under the bill. SEN. STORY stated his understanding is they are certificated however, due to annual requirements, they will experience the same problems. SEN. STORY, referring to those service people already deployed, asked whether the bill will need to be retroactive in application. REP. BROWN responded, were the bill's effective date sometime in April, there may be some members already effected, accordingly, it may be appropriate to make the bill retroactive for those already overseas.

SENATOR EDWARD BUTCHER inquired about the amendments and how they address access in schools. REP. BROWN replied the current amendments are specifically related to the professional license portion of the bill. SEN. BUTCHER asked which particular aspects of the bill were new and which were modifications to present statutes. REP. BROWN explained all professional licensing board laws are contained in present statutes, this bill simply inserts language protecting the interests of armed services personnel by coordinating those sections to the new Section Two.

### Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 29.7 - 31}

**REP. BROWN** expressed his appreciation to the parties who appeared to testify and to the Committee. He stated he does agree with the proposed amendments. He also expressed appreciation to all armed services members who protect our country, noting we owe these people the protections afforded by this bill. He requested the Committee recommend Do Concur on the bill.

#### EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 285

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 2 - 9.8}

Motion: SENATOR TOM ZOOK moved that HB 285 BE CONCURRED IN.

#### Discussion:

Motion: SEN. ZOOK moved that HB 028501.ACE BE ADOPTED.

**SEN. BUTCHER** stated his concern with the amendments, noting he was unable to find certain language in the statutes.

**SENATOR JEFF MANGAN** offered his understanding is the amendments simply identify either "stricken" or "inserted" language, they do not contain the entire statutory sections.

**SENATOR TOM ZOOK** also attempted to address **SEN. BUTCHER's** concerns by reiterating earlier testimony regarding the omission.

Vote: Motion that HB 028501.ace BE ADOPTED carried unanimously.

<u>Motion</u>: SEN. MANGAN moved that HB 285 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED.

SEN. STORY conveyed concerns regarding whether additional professions are being missed by the bill as written. Again referring to EMT's, he explained he does not know whether they are state or organizationally certified, but he does believe they should be afforded the same protections.

CHAIRMAN BILL GLASER noted EMTs are certified by state agencies, and therefore may not be covered by the bill.

**SEN. MANGAN** requested **Mr. Braun** provide a list of professions currently covered by the bill.

**SEN. RYAN** informed the Committee **Mr. Braun** provided testimony on a similar issue before Business and Labor.

Due to concerns expressed by Committee members, SEN. MANGAN withdrew his motion that HB 285 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED.

# HEARING ON HB 573

<u>Sponsor</u>: REPRESENTATIVE JOHN PARKER

Proponents: Jeff Weldon, Legal Counsel, Office of Public

Instruction (OPI)

Opponents: NONE

<u>Informational Witnesses</u>: NONE

### Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 11.1 - 12.8}

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN PARKER, HD 45, north central Great Falls, brought forward a bill which allows a parent or guardian of a diabetic student to designate a school district employee to administer glucagon to the student in an emergency situation, and which limits the liability of the school employee and school district. REP. PARKER stated this is a constituent bill from a student at the University of Montana School of Law. He explained the bill responds to a basic question: what would a teacher do in the event a student with diabetes became unconscious due to a drop in blood sugar level? The bill allows a parent to designate someone in the district to administer emergency glucagon shots. The designee must voluntarily agree to serve in this capacity. The bill also provides a certain level of civil immunity for the good faith efforts of the volunteer.

# <u>Proponents' Testimony</u>:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 13 - 13.9}

Jeff Weldon, Legal Counsel, OPI, conveyed his agency's support for the bill. Mr. Weldon stated the bill does two things which are very important: 1) it recognizes the authority of a parent over a child with this condition; and, 2) it protects the school employee and the school from ordinary negligence. He noted the bill was amended to provide clarity regarding the exclusion from immunity for "willful or wanton misconduct," "intentional harm to the child," or "gross negligence." Mr. Weldon believes it makes good sense to protect children with this condition while protecting the school at the same time. He expressed his appreciation to the Committee.

#### Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 14.1 - 21}

SEN. MANGAN, referring to the requirement of Section 1, subsection (2), inquired whether it might also be important to require the school have written documentation showing the designee received training required by subsection (4). REP. PARKER replied he would be comfortable with the amendment suggested by SEN. MANGAN.

**SEN. STORY,** referring to the limitation of liability for a person who administers glucagon, asked if the language creates a

PARKER stated he believes the only liability arising from this bill is in the event a person does something which rises above normal negligence. He deferred the question to Mr. Weldon. Mr. Weldon, relying upon page one, lines 25 - 26, stated it could be argued, for example, that failure to administer constitutes "gross negligence" as an omission. SEN. STORY stated he would prefer the protection work in both instances because, while we always hope for a positive outcome, we realize results are sometimes negative. Mr. Weldon referred SEN. STORY to a bill passed last session which provides protection for parent-designees who change food tubes.

SEN. ZOOK—using the example of a parent—designee being unavailable on the day a child becomes ill, and an otherwise unrelated employee realizes something is wrong and wants to do something to assist the child—asked what the person should do. REP. PARKER replied SEN. ZOOK's example provides a situation in which any teacher could find themselves. He conceded the bill does not address that type of instance. He does not believe the bill imposes a duty on the person present, and necessarily means a default to the present situation. Although noting the bill cannot cover all possibilities, he hopes by providing some guidance we improve the present situation somewhat.

SEN. RYAN inquired whether the bill's terminology regarding "one designee" places too great a restraint on a school's ability to deal with this type of situation when they have 1,500 - 1,700 students. REP. PARKER replied he does not believe the bill limits a school's ability to have more than one designee. However, if the Committee would like language placed in the bill stipulating more than one may exist, he would be comfortable with that type of change.

# Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 21.2 - 22.4}

REP. PARKER expressed his appreciation to the Committee. He explained a parent in his district requested he substitute legislation passed in Oregon for his bill, noting he chose not to do so because he believes the research that went into this bill is more appropriate for Montana. Also, Oregon and Washington legislation are much more stringent in application. This bill is more permissive and voluntary, and provides protection for individuals who choose to serve in this capacity. He requested the Committee recommend Do Concur on HB 573.

### HEARING ON HB 572

Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE GARY BRANAE

Proponents: Jeff Weldon, Legal Counsel, OPI

Steve Gettel, Superintendent, Montana School

for the Deaf & Blind (MSDB)

Opponents: NONE

Informational Witnesses: KATHLEEN GALVIN-HALCRO, REPRESENTATIVE,

HD 48, Great Falls

Bob Runkel, Director of Special

Education, Office of Public Instruction

(OPI)

## Opening Statement by Sponsor:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 22.8 - 25}

REPRESENTATIVE GARY BRANAE, HD 17, southwest Billings, brought forward a bill which revises certain aspects of how services are provided to students with blindness, including: how the necessity of Braille instruction is determined; requiring additional training for relevant teachers; and, how textbook selections are made. REP. BRANAE explained a version of the bill was presented to the House Education Committee last session but did not go forward. He outlined the various proposed amendments to the bill, noting how each attempts to address the provision of aid to these students.

# <u>Proponents' Testimony</u>:

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 25.1 - 31.2}

Jeff Weldon, Legal Counsel, OPI, conveyed his agency's support of HB 572. Mr. Weldon explained under current special education law if a child needs braille books, the books must be provided. Under new section three of the bill, a child study team may stipulate the child does not need braille books. Section four discusses specialized training for teachers who provide services to students with blindness. New sections five and six provide selection criteria for a district when purchasing new textbooks. Particularly, when selecting textbooks, a district must include as a part of their criteria the availability of a braille text. Mr. Weldon also noted the delayed effective date of 2004 to allow districts an opportunity to implement new requirements.

Steve Gettel, Superintendent, MSDB, conveyed the support of the school. He explained MSDB sees this bill as a way to heighten awareness in Montana's school districts about the needs of blind children who attend public schools. He stated the bill's requirement that special education teachers will develop the skills necessary to facilitate braille instruction is important because only about twenty-five percent (25%) of special education students have a special education teacher on their IEP team that has specific training in education of the blind. MSDB does provide consultation services to the ninety-two districts who currently have deaf and blind children in their schools; with three outreach consultants who serve visually impaired students. He stated one of the biggest challenges to any district is having a child enroll unexpectedly who learns by the braille method. He briefly discussed how MSDB facilitates the needs of districts, and provided information on the types of funding available to contain costs.

### Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0.5 - 24.5}

SEN. BUTCHER asked whether this bill imposes new requirements such that a district having purchased new texts will be compelled to order all new texts upon the enrollment of a blind student. Bob Runkel, Director of Special Education, OPI, explained the bill requires a district include the availability of braille texts in their selection process, it does not require a district to purchase braille texts. SEN. BUTCHER rephrased his question asking if a district must anticipate potential enrollment of a blind student, or should this only effect a district which presently has such students. Mr. Runkel replied the intent is to have districts include the criteria in their process regardless of whether they have a blind student enrolled. SEN. BUTCHER asked if it is correct that once the bill is enacted only textbooks which are offered in braille will be able to be selected. Mr. Runkel replied in the negative, explaining the bill requires the availability of braille texts be considered when choosing between one publisher and another. In other words, all things being equal between two textbooks, if one offers a braille version that would be the text chosen. The bill does not require a school to choose a lower level of quality text. Mr. Runkel also noted, due to requirements established by the "Americans with Disabilities Act," most well-respected publishers already offer a braille version of textbooks. SEN. BUTCHER stated his perception is this bill places a demand upon local schools, he asked whether the state should be paying for additional costs associated with purchasing these books. Runkel replied the obligation of state and federal governments to

assist in meeting the established requirements is an important factor.

SEN. MANGAN posed a question regarding the \$1,000 figure on page two, line 17. REPRESENTATIVE KATHLEEN GALVIN-HALCRO explained she requested the amendment be included in the bill to ensure associated costs would not be too great for any district. The \$1,000 limit is particularly directed toward protecting small districts that cannot possibly afford a greater difference. SEN. MANGAN asked if the difference in cost is normally substantial. REP. GALVIN-HALCRO stated the electronic version of the text would be more than the \$1,000. She also stated her understanding is the cost of the version is not distinguishable, however, having the text transcribed into braille is very costly due to paper cost and wages paid to a transcriber. It is her intent the bill's requirements not become punitive in nature.

SEN. MANGAN posed a question regarding price to Mr. Runkel, noting his perception is electronic versions should be less costly because they are more easily mass produced and normal print costs are eliminated. Mr. Runkel deferred to Mr. Gettel. Mr. Gettel explained there is a broad range on costs. The electronic version of these texts can be pulled up on a regular computer with the information being sent to an embosser. To emboss a single page of regular print will normally require three pages of braille print at a cost of thirty cents (\$0.30) per page. He also briefly explained the average costs of CD-rom versions. SEN. MANGAN inquired whether blind students have the same access to free, quality education as non-disabled students. Mr. Gettel replied in affirmative, noting IDEA and Montana law. SEN. MANGAN stated his understanding is MSDB's outreach program will assist other schools in these areas. He asked Mr. Gettel if his understanding was correct. Mr. Gettel replied one of the purposes of the school is to assist all districts in the state in providing services to children with deafness and blindness.

SEN. STORY inquired whether technology exists to allow a student to read from the screen as opposed to printing the information on paper. Mr. Gettel replied in the affirmative, noting MSDB has equipment called refreshable braille. The panel sits in front of the keyboard, and information taken from the screen is placed into six-dot braille patterns. Thus, it is not necessary to print the information, but when print is preferable the information must be put through the embosser. SEN. STORY, referring to the bill's training requirements, asked whether similar law exists for teachers assisting deaf students, or is placing an aide in the classroom sufficient. Mr. Gettel replied, at present, it varies between districts. Some of the larger districts have specialized teachers, while some smaller districts

rely upon in-class aides. With regard to what is required by law specifically, Mr. Gettel deferred to Mr. Runkel.

**SEN. STORY** posed the question regarding statutory requirements for hearing impaired students to **Mr. Runkel. Mr. Runkel** explained present law stipulates a teacher (aide) shall obtain sufficient skills necessary to enable the student to work effectively with the school under teacher supervision.

SEN. RYAN inquired whether MSDB will be providing some of the training required by the bill. Mr. Gettel stated the school presently provides some of this type of training through OPI and they will continue to do so. He also noted there are many other programs available. SEN. RYAN, referring to Mr. Gettel's statement regarding the location and numbers of children being served, inquired how many teachers currently have appropriate training, or will be required to obtain additional training. And, will MSDB need additional staff to meet the new demand. Mr. Gettel replied there are presently about 180 visually impaired students receiving services, with about sixty percent (60%) being served by MSDB's consultants. As of last school year, the number of students with teachers having specialized training was approximately thirty percent (30%). He emphasized not all 180 students need braille instruction, that number is actually much smaller. He also noted two of the three outreach consultants know braille and work with students in need of that medium.

SENATOR ROYAL JOHNSON inquired about budget allocations for MSDB. Mr. Gettel replied the present budget is approximately \$25,000 above that proposed by the executive department. SEN. JOHNSON asked whether the \$25,000, in addition to MSDB's current budget, is sufficient to cover any costs which may arise from this bill's requirements. Mr. Gettel replied, noting the school took a \$43,000 reduction in the special session, they are somewhat behind in various areas, however, they have made cuts in nonessential operating costs in order to maintain their budget. He believes they will be in the same situation for the next two years. Mr. Gettel explained the school will adjust their resources in order to meet the needs of children. SEN. JOHNSON conveyed his support of the bill and for the services provided by MSDB, but noted he does not see how there can be no fiscal impact to the school. He asked Mr. Gettel to address that concern. Mr. Gettel explained he was not certain how many students will need services next year. If there are ten new students who need braille services, then his school is probably not in the financial position it needs to be. However, if the numbers remain the same, they will be able to continue doing as they are at present.

# Closing by Sponsor:

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 24.7 - 26.4}

REP. BRANAE relayed a personal experience about being a math teacher with a blind student in his class. He remembers the volumes of books required, but mostly he remember the particular student. The student was tremendously bright with a great attitude, worked very hard, and he is certain became very successful. Having the books available in braille made it possible for this student to go much further in the classroom than would otherwise have been possible. He believes this bill provides an opportunity for more students to become successful and make positive contributions to society. He understands there are some concerns about money, however, as noted, there are opportunities for certain scholarships. He encouraged the Committee consider the entire package and recommend Do Concur.

# EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 572

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 27.3 - 31} {Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 1.7 - 10}

Motion: SEN. STORY moved that HB 573 BE CONCURRED IN.

#### Discussion:

SEN. BUTCHER expressed concern with the bill's potential impact on small schools. He believes, if the choice is made to impose this criteria, the state should be providing adequate resources to fund the requirement. He noted there are some excellent facilities within the state providing services to children in need.

**SEN. RYAN** conveyed a personal experience with a student who was trained in braille at **MSDB**, who then returned to live with his family and attend regular classes. He believes adding the selection criteria is important.

**SEN. MANGAN** stated, although he is uncomfortable with the \$1,000 limit, he supports the bill as a necessary part of the education process.

**SEN. JOHNSON** stated his perception of the bill is that it does mandate some services, i.e., specialized training. He thinks the intent is appropriate, however he would prefer it be a local decision because schools are already struggling financially.

CHAIRMAN GLASER, referring the constitution's guarantee of "equality of educational opportunity" for every person in the state, posed the rhetorical question: "how do you deliver equality of educational opportunity to children if they are unable to hear, see, or are immobile?"

SEN. BUTCHER, agreeing with CHAIRMAN GLASER's assertion, inquired how far does the state's obligation extend. There is a point where the state is simply making it more convenient for each individual; convenience costs a great deal of money. He referred to SEN. RYAN's story and reiterated the young man went away to school, then returned after being trained. When we require each school to provide all services, in many of the more rural areas, we may be imposing too great a burden.

**SEN. ZOOK**, conveying his support of the bill, stated he would prefer the bill be revised in a manner so as to be permissive in application. If the mandatory aspects of the bill were removed, he believes the bill would be more palatable.

**SEN. MANGAN** stated the first two "must" statements are acceptable, however, on page two, line 25, the "must" statement makes the bill more mandatory than originally suggested.

SEN. STORY WITHDREW his motion that HB 572 BE CONCURRED IN.

# <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>

Adjournment:	5:00 P.M.					
			SEN.	BILL	GLASER,	Chairman
				TARI	ELAM,	Secretary
BG/TE						

EXHIBIT (eds50aad)